



LOCAL HELP FOR PEOPLE WITH MEDICARE

## Ask SHIP

Mary Phillips

**Q:** Do I have to go to my regular doctor to get my flu shot? Will Medicare pay for a flu shot received at a health fair?

**A:** You can go to any licensed doctor or provider to get your flu shot. The shot may be given at various locations, such as the doctor's office, a clinic, a pharmacy, or a health fair.

If you go to a doctor or provider who participates in Medicare, you will pay nothing for the shot. As this vaccination is a Medicare covered service, to avoid paying out of pocket always check to see if whoever is offering the flu shot will bill Medicare.

As the flu is a highly contagious respiratory infection, it is important to get a flu shot. Because the viruses that cause the flu change often, the vaccine is updated each year to make sure that it is as effective as possible. Protection

develops about two weeks after getting the shot and may last up to a year.

Note: if you are in a Medicare Advantage Plan, check with your plan for details on how the plan pays for the flu shot.

**Q:** There is a history of diabetes in my family, what diabetic services does Medicare cover?

**A:** Diabetes is a medical condition in which your body does not make enough insulin, or has a reduced response to insulin. Diabetes causes your blood sugar to be too high. A high blood sugar level is not good for your health. For people with Medicare at risk for getting diabetes, Medicare covers a screening blood sugar test to check for diabetes. You are considered at risk if you have any of the following:

- high blood pressure,
- dyslipidemia (history of abnormal cholesterol and triglyceride levels),
- obesity, or
- a history of high blood sugar.

Other risk factors may also qualify you for this test and based on the results, you may be eligible for up to two screenings each year. You will pay nothing for

this test under Original Medicare.

Blood sugar self-testing equipment and supplies are covered for all people with Medicare Part B, who have diabetes. Medicare currently covers the same type of blood sugar testing supplies whether or not you use insulin. The supplies covered include blood sugar monitors, test strips, lancets, lancet devices and glucose control solutions for checking the accuracy of equipment and strips. If you are in Original Medicare, you will have a 20% coinsurance after the annual Medicare Part B deductible has been met.

Diabetes Self-Management Training is available for certain people with Medicare who are at risk for complications from diabetes. Your doctor must request this service. If you are in Original Medicare, you will have a 20% coinsurance after the annual Medicare Part B deductible has been met.

If you are in a Medicare Advantage Plan, check with your plan for details on how the plan pays for the screening tests, testing supplies and self-management training.

Address your questions to:

Ask SHIP  
714 West 53<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Anderson, IN 46013  
Or [www.Medicare.in.gov](http://www.Medicare.in.gov)  
1-800-452-4800

**SHIP is a free, unbiased counseling program provided by the Indiana State Department of Insurance. For assistance, call your local SHIP site to make an appointment or call the state office at 1-800-452-4800 to obtain a list of local SHIP sites.**